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Agenda item 7
Adoption of the report of the Committee on its fifty-eighth session

Draft report

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Addendum

Programme questions: evaluation

(*Item 3 (c)*)

Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations from the programme evaluation of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme

1. At its 6th meeting, on 6 June 2018, the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations from the programme evaluation of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) (E/AC.51/2018/2).

2. The Assistant Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services introduced the report and, together with representatives of UN-Habitat, responded to questions raised during its consideration by the Committee.

Discussion

3. Appreciation was expressed for the report and for the positive overall assessment therein that UN-Habitat had implemented six of the seven recommendations reflected in the evaluation report (recommendations 1–5 and 7) and had partially implemented the remaining recommendation (recommendation 6). Delegations welcomed the efforts of UN-Habitat to implement the recommendations despite the administrative and financial constraints referenced in the report. Several delegations expressed their concurrence with the conclusions and recommendations contained in the evaluation report and underlined the importance of continued efforts by UN-Habitat to continue implementing the recommendations, especially

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recommendation 6, on strengthening information and knowledge management, which had been only partially implemented.

4. Delegations underscored the important role of UN-Habitat in implementing the New Urban Agenda and key aspects of the Sustainable Development Goals and expressed their support for the work undertaken by UN-Habitat, including in the innovative development of cities with minimal impact on the environment. A delegation expressed the view that UN-Habitat should operate as the focal point for the New Urban Agenda and work with others, including governmental and private sector partners, and fill niches where it had a competitive edge. The view was also expressed that, in 40 years of work, UN-Habitat had gathered important expertise, which should be drawn upon, including in the context of achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

5. With regard to recommendation 2, on finalizing an accountability framework, a delegation stressed the importance of continuing to improve risk management and defining wider strategies of action and accountability issues in the organization. The delegation also highlighted the importance of accountability vis-à-vis Governments of countries where UN-Habitat was carrying out its programmes.

6. Several delegations highlighted the work of regional and country offices of UN-Habitat as key vehicles for cultivating and maintaining partnerships with governmental and non-governmental actors and for building synergies among different actors, critical to the achievement of the UN-Habitat mandate, the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in the face of resource constraints. With regard to regional offices, the need for clarity and transparency on any changes made to those offices was highlighted.

7. As concerns recommendation 3, on developing a strategic plan for each regional office, and the information, contained in the report, that UN-Habitat had developed and issued regional strategies for the four regions, one delegation noted that Eastern Europe was not among the four regions and emphasized that UN-Habitat should attend to the needs of all countries, even if they were not currently covered by one of the four UN-Habitat regional offices. A delegation sought clarification on the linking of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and "delivering as one" (para. 31) and stressed that the two were not one concept. Further information was also sought on the reference to "developing as one" (footnote 3).

8. Regarding recommendation 6, on strengthening information and knowledge management, it was noted that a plan of action had been established, and information was sought on what measures had been and would be undertaken to fully implement it. A delegation acknowledged that it was a difficult period for UN-Habitat and stressed the need to ensure that its secretariat was strengthened from a financial and human resources point of view to enable it to implement its mandates, particularly in connection with the creation of a Knowledge Management Unit.

9. As concerns recommendation 7, on the finalization of resource mobilization and partnership strategies, several delegations, while welcoming the significant improvements made overall, stressed that resource mobilization must be strengthened and expressed concern at the lack of mechanisms to successfully manage partnerships and at the almost complete reliance on extrabudgetary resources. In that regard, it was stressed that the lack of predictable funding put in danger accountability and the ability of Member States to guide operational norms and standards.

Conclusions and recommendations

10. **The Committee expressed its appreciation to the Office of Internal Oversight Services for the triennial review of the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee at its fifty-fifth session on the programme evaluation of UN-Habitat (see E/AC.51/2015/2).**

11. **The Committee noted that, of the seven recommendations in the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, six had been implemented and one had been partially implemented, commended UN-Habitat for the progress that it had made in implementing those recommendations and further encouraged UN-Habitat to continue to implement the outstanding recommendation.**

12. **The Committee expressed its expectation that the efforts currently under way, as described in paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 72/226, to examine options for strengthening Member States' oversight of UN-Habitat would contribute to better risk management, increased accountability and more effective resource mobilization and partnership strategies.**